United Nations S/2008/179

Security Council

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Letter dated 10 March 2008 from the Permanent Observer of the League of Arab States to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Pursuant to Article 54 of the Charter of the United Nations, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a decision adopted by the Council of the League of Arab States at its meeting held at the ministerial level during its 129th ordinary session (Cairo, 5 March 2008) regarding the occupation by Iran of the three Arab islands in the Arabian Gulf belonging to the United Arab Emirates: the Greater Tunb, the Lesser Tunb and Abu Musa (resolution 6869) (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would arrange for the text of this letter and its annex to be circulated as a Security Council document.

(*Signed*) Yahya **Mahmassani**
Ambassador

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Annex to the letter dated 10 March 2008 from the Permanent Observer of the League of Arab States to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

[Original: Arabic]

Occupation by Iran of the three Arab islands in the Arabian Gulf belonging to the United Arab Emirates: the Greater Tunb, the Lesser Tunb and Abu Musa

Resolution 6869 (5 March 2008)

The Council of the League at the ministerial level,

Having considered:

- The note of the General Secretariat,
- The report on the intersessional activities of the General Secretariat,
- The recommendation of the Political Affairs Committee,

Guided by the resolutions of the previous summit, the last of which was resolution 376 of the Riyadh Summit (19th ordinary session) of 29 March 2007 concerning the occupation by the Islamic Republic of Iran of three islands in the Arabian Gulf, namely the Greater Tunb, the Lesser Tunb and Abu Musa, which belong to the United Arab Emirates,

Reaffirming its earlier resolutions, the most recent of which was resolution 6801 (128th ordinary session) of 5 September 2007,

Resolves

1. To reaffirm without qualification the absolute sovereignty of the United Arab Emirates over its three islands of the Greater Tunb, the Lesser Tunb and Abu Musa and to support all peaceful measures and means adopted by the United Arab Emirates to regain its sovereignty over the occupied islands;

2. To denounce the continued consolidation by the Iranian Government of its occupation of the three islands and its violation of the sovereignty of the United Arab Emirates, which can only undermine security and stability in the region and pose a threat to international peace and security;

3. To condemn the building by the Islamic Republic of Iran of housing facilities to settle Iranians on the three occupied Arab islands;

4. To condemn the Iranian military manoeuvres being conducted also on the three occupied islands of the United Arab Emirates, namely, the Greater Tunb, the Lesser Tunb and Abu Musa, and those islands' territorial waters, airspace, continental shelf and exclusive economic zone, which constitute an inseparable part of the United Arab Emirates, and to request that Iran desist from such violations and acts of provocation which constitute interference in the internal affairs of an independent, sovereign State, do not promote confidence-building, threaten security and stability in the region and endanger the security and safety of regional and international navigation in the Arabian Gulf;

5. To appeal once again to the Iranian Government to end its occupation of the three islands of the United Arab Emirates, refrain from trying to impose a fait accompli by force, desist from establishing any installations for the purpose of modifying the islands' residential or demographic structure, revoke all measures and remove all installations unilaterally put in place on the three Arab islands, inasmuch as such measures and claims are null and void, lack any legal effect and do not diminish the established right of the United Arab Emirates over its three islands and are acts that run counter to the provisions of international law and the Geneva Convention of 1949; and to call upon the Iranian Government to adopt peaceful means for resolving the dispute existing with regard to those islands in accordance with the principles and norms of international law, including agreement to refer the matter to the International Court of Justice;

6. To express the hope that the Islamic Republic of Iran will reconsider its position of rejecting the effort to find a peaceful solution to the issue of the three occupied islands of the United Arab Emirates either through direct, earnest negotiations or through recourse to the International Court of Justice;

7. To call upon Iran to translate its stated desire for improved relations with the Arab countries and for dialogue and détente into concrete steps, both in word and in deed, in the form of a genuine response to the earnest appeals launched by His Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the United Arab Emirates, the Arab States members of the Gulf Cooperation Council, the Arab States, the international community, friendly nations and the Secretary-General of the United Nations, calling for a solution to the dispute over the three occupied islands by peaceful means in accordance with customary practice and the covenants and rules of international law, either through direct, earnest negotiations or through recourse to the International Court of Justice, so as to build trust and enhance security and stability in the Arabian Gulf region;

8. To have all Arab States undertake, in their contacts with Iran, to raise the issue of Iran's occupation of the three islands in order to stress the need to end it, based on the fact that the three islands are occupied Arab territory;

9. To inform the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the President of the Security Council of the importance of maintaining the issue on the list of matters of which the Security Council is seized until Iran ends its occupation of the three Arab islands and the United Arab Emirates regains its full sovereignty over them;

10. To request the Secretary-General to follow up this matter and report to the Council at its next ordinary session.

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Security Council

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Letter dated 14 March 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Rwanda to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

The Government of the Republic of Rwanda takes note of Security Council resolution 1804 (2008) of 13 March 2008.

The Government of the Republic of Rwanda welcomes the fact that at last, 14 years after the 1994 genocide, the Security Council has unanimously adopted resolution 1804 (2008), targeting the authors of that genocide, namely, the ex-FAR/Interahamwe, currently known as the Forces démocratiques de liberation du Rwanda (FDLR), and the Rally for Unity and Democracy (RUD-Urunana), among others.

The Government welcomes the expressed determination of the Security Council to end the threat posed by the above-named groups to the security and sovereignty of the Republic of Rwanda, of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and of the entire Great Lakes region by, inter alia, demanding their unconditional disarmament and repatriation, imposing targeted measures under resolutions 1596 (2005), 1649 (2005) and 1698 (2006), including the imposition of travel bans and an assets freeze against, in particular, the leaders of the group and their supporters, as well as reinforcing the arms embargo on them under resolutions 1493 (2003) and 1596 (2005).

The Government recognizes the important role played by the international community in the search for peace, security and stability in the Great Lakes region, in particular through support to the Tripartite Plus process, the implementation of the Nairobi communiqué between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Republic of Rwanda and the international conference on peace, security, stability and development in the Great Lakes region.

The Government expresses its determination to continue cooperation with the Democratic Republic of the Congo and other partners in ending the threat posed in particular by the ex-FAR/Interahamwe (FDLR, RUD-Urunana), as well as other armed groups, to the region.

Finally, the Government of the Republic of Rwanda reiterates its welcome and encouragement to all members of the Rwandan armed groups who wish to repatriate and calls on the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to help them do so safely and expeditiously. Rwanda assures that it will continue to

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receive and reinsert them into society with the dignity all Rwandans deserve. Returnees will continue to be guaranteed safety, security and the enjoyment of all the rights to which Rwandans are constitutionally entitled.

We request that the present letter be circulated to all members of the Security Council and be issued as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Joseph **Nsengimana**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

United Nations S/2008/181

Security Council

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17 March 2008

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Report of the Secretary-General on developments in Guinea-Bissau and on the activities of the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in that country

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to paragraph 14 of Security Council resolution 1233 (1999), by which the Council requested me to keep it regularly informed and to submit a report on developments in Guinea-Bissau and on the activities of the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNOGBIS). Subsequently, in paragraph 11 of its resolution 1580 (2004), the Council requested me to submit a written report to it every three months.

2. The present report focuses on developments since my last report (S/2007/715), dated 6 December 2007; in particular it provides details on progress in the various resource mobilization efforts by the Government.

II. Political developments

3. During the first ordinary session of Parliament, held from 19 November to 19 December 2007, the National Assembly approved the Government programme and the 2007 and 2008 budgets. This endorsement lent significant political legitimacy to the Government of Prime Minister Martinho N'Dafa Cabi, dispelling doubts about the viability of a Government based on the political and government stability pact signed by three political parties on 12 March 2007. However, on 29 February 2008, the President of the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC), Carlos Gomes Jr., issued a statement announcing the withdrawal of the party's political confidence in the Prime Minister over issues of internal discipline.

4. On 13 December 2007, the National Assembly unanimously approved draft legislation granting amnesty to those involved in "political-military motivated crimes and infractions" against the security of the State up to 6 October 2004. The draft law has been submitted for review to the parliamentary permanent special commission on human rights, legal and constitutional affairs. The commission is expected to revert to the National Assembly during the second ordinary session, scheduled for 28 February to 26 March 2008. Although the draft law proposes granting amnesty to all those involved in political-military interventions, it does not

preclude future civil lawsuits and also makes provision for compensation for victims and their families. In the context of Security Council resolution 1580 (2004), UNOGBIS raised the issues of justice and impunity with the authorities and organized training to provide parliamentarians with practical tools to debate the amnesty bill. Proponents of the amnesty law, including the President, João Bernardo Vieira, and the Chief of the General Staff, argued that it would facilitate reconciliation and pave the way for the planned security sector reform. Civil society organizations, on the other hand, while recognizing the positive impact that it might have on national reconciliation, considered that there should have been broader involvement of civil society in the debate and that the issues of truth and restorative justice were not sufficiently addressed.

5. On 26 January 2008, the President of the Supreme Court, Maria do Céu Monteiro, was overwhelmingly re-elected by an electoral college of her peers, consisting of nine Supreme Court judges. The Supreme Court is the final authority on constitutional, administrative and legal matters. It plays a crucial role in electoral disputes, and is the court of final appeal in the event of challenges to the electoral results announced by the National Electoral Commission. The election was mired in controversy over the interpretation of two pieces of legislation, one of which provided for a restricted electoral college, while the other (more recent law of 2002) provided for a wider electoral college consisting of about 100 judges from the various judicial institutions. Ms. Monteiro's main rival, Emílio Kafft Kosta, a judge of the Supreme Court, boycotted the election. His protest to the election commission was rejected. Critics stated that the election was a serious blow to the rule of law and complained of political interference in the process.

6. Following the recommendations of a United Nations electoral assistance mission to Guinea-Bissau late in 2007, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has finalized a project document to provide support for the 2008-2010 electoral cycle, which includes the 2008 legislative elections and the presidential elections scheduled for 2010. UNDP and the Government are also engaged in discussions on the electoral budget and voter registration methodology. UNDP has proposed a budget of US$ 4.7 million for the legislative elections. Electoral assistance through the United Nations will be financed through a multi-donor fund managed by UNDP. So far the equivalent of $1.2 million has been secured: $887,000 from the European Commission and $272,500 from UNDP. The UNDP project provides for the issuing of biometric voter identification cards, as used in the recent elections in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Togo, on the grounds of enhanced technical efficiency, cost reduction in the medium and long term, and increased reliability of the electoral roll, thus enhancing the credibility of the system. The UNDP budget does not include the payment of arrears owed to the national and regional electoral commissions accumulated from past elections, estimated at $1.7 million. The cost of voter registration in the diaspora and the salaries of government officials in charge of the electoral process, amounting to $2 million, are also not included in the current budgetary estimates. The authorities have yet to set a date for the legislative elections.

7. The Chief of the General Staff, General Tagme Na Waie, in comments broadcasted at the end of January, warned politicians to respect the results of the forthcoming elections or face arrest. His comments were criticized as inopportune by the National Civil Society Movement for Peace, Democracy and Development. The Movement urged the military not to interfere in political and legal matters, and

also called on the international community to continue to closely follow political and social developments in the country.

8. Following consultations with the Social Renewal Party (PRS), the Government announced a partial Cabinet reshuffle on 12 January, involving four posts, three of which are held by PRS appointees. PAIGC and the United Social Democratic Party (PUSD) did not propose further changes affecting posts held by members of their parties. Meanwhile, the Supreme Court, in a ruling on 15 February, confirmed Kumba Yalá as winner in the PRS leadership contest in August 2007. For its part, PAIGC will convene its congress, during which, among other things, a leadership election will be held, from 3 to 6 April.

9. The participative dialogue programme led by the National Institute for Studies and Research and Interpeace — Voz di Paz/Voice of Peace — launched in February 2008 its research on the root causes of conflict through grass-roots consultations in 38 constituencies. Four meetings involving approximately 50 to 60 participants each were held on subjects of specific interest in the towns of Gabú, Quinhamel, Canchungo and Buba in February. Designed to hear the views of the population on local and national issues, the participative research will continue for the rest of the year. Recurrent problems identified were the generalized weakness or absence of the State; cohabitation of the Christian, Muslim and animist religions; cohabitation of Bissau-Guinean and immigrant populations; the use of ethnicity as a strategy to win power; insecurity as an aggravating factor of poor economic performance; and mismanagement of natural resources as a source of deepening poverty.

10. Under the capacity-building programme for parliamentarians funded by the United Nations Democracy Fund and coordinated by UNDP, the Netherlands Development Organization (SNV) and UNOGBIS organized training in conflict transformation skills from 14 to 18 January 2008 for 15 parliamentarians, including 2 women. Fourteen parliamentarians also attended the leadership training workshop facilitated by SNV from 7 to 11 January. On 19 February, SNV also assisted the National Assembly in facilitating a workshop to promote information exchange between parliamentarians and other stakeholders. It was attended by 15 parliamentarians, 15 civil society representatives, 15 members of the press and 15 representatives of the private sector. Another workshop, funded by the United Nations Democracy Fund, was held on 26 February and discussed items on the agenda of the parliamentary session, including such topics as taxes, local government and female genital mutilation.

11. From 11 to 16 February 2008, SNV and UNOGBIS also facilitated a workshop funded by the Government of the Netherlands on conflict transformation for 11 senior political and military advisers nominated by the Offices of the President and the Prime Minister, the leaders of the parliamentary parties (PAIGC, PRS and PUSD) and the Chief of the General Staff. The aim was to provide the participants with conflict analysis tools; promote mutual confidence and an awareness of the need for interdependence and collaboration; and enhance negotiation principles and practice.

12. UNOGBIS continues to support a project led by the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding, under its Women in Peacebuilding Programme, aiming at disseminating Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security. A workshop on the subject was organized on 18 and 19 December 2007 for 30 participants and broadcast on national radio. The workshop highlighted the need

to increase the participation of women in key national political processes, such as national reconciliation, elections, peace consolidation and socio-economic recovery. Two plans of action were drawn up by the workshop, recommending the increased role of women in reconciliation efforts within the armed forces and creating a women's group to lobby the national authorities to adopt and implement the provisions of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000).

III. Economic and social aspects

13. During the period under review, the socio-economic situation remained fragile but stable. On 28 January 2008, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Government of Guinea-Bissau signed a one-year two-phase emergency post-conflict assistance facility for $5.6 million. The 2008 programme includes measures focusing on building capacity in revenue administration and public expenditure management. Satisfactory implementation of the programme could pave the way for a poverty reduction growth facility arrangement and eventually debt relief under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries programme and the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative. The IMF Executive Board also extended to Guinea-Bissau interim debt relief which reduces debt servicing by 50 per cent. The World Bank, on 29 January, retroactively extended a similar interim debt relief mechanism that had expired on 15 December 2007. The World Bank is currently preparing an interim strategy note to provide support to Guinea-Bissau in the implementation of the poverty reduction strategy paper. Also, in January, the World Bank provided three generators with a collective capacity of 2.5 megawatts as an interim response to a request by the Government for assistance in addressing the country's critical energy shortage situation.

14. The financial situation remains worrying despite progress under the Government's minimum programme to re-establish fiscal stability, which was agreed in May 2007. The numerous tax reductions and exemptions granted in 2006, which reduced government revenue by 22 per cent in 2007, have been abolished and progress has been made in revenue collection. However, the Government payroll continues to exceed revenues and the Government's inability to pay current salaries on time, combined with rising prices, remains a major source of social tension. On 11 January 2008, the European Commission and the Government signed agreements granting €5.9 million in budgetary support in 2008 and €800,000 for the legislative elections. Portugal contributed €2 million in budgetary support. In accordance with a note signed by China and Guinea-Bissau in November 2006, the two Governments signed a contract on 20 February 2008 for the construction of a government secretariat. China will also build a 150-bed military hospital.

15. The most recent food security monitoring survey indicates that some 14 per cent of rural households are either moderately or severely food insecure. The figures are expected to rise as the lean season, from June to October, approaches. In January 2008, the Government signed the 2008-2012 country programme action plan with UNDP, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), as well as the 2008-2010 biannual working plan with the World Health Organization. The agreements operationalize the United Nations development assistance framework, which was agreed with the authorities in 2007. UNICEF and the World Food Programme signed a memorandum of understanding with the Government to provide school canteens in an effort to improve the quality

of the learning environment for children. Strikes in the health and education sectors over the non-payment of salary arrears and contractual issues, as well as continued institutional instability in the Ministry of Education, could seriously jeopardize the current school year and disrupt United Nations programmes in the social sectors. Living conditions in the capital have deteriorated owing to extreme water shortages that have persisted for several months. Likewise, the supply of electricity, normally scarce, has now virtually come to a halt, affecting the supply of water. Although the three generators provided by the World Bank have been installed, there has been no significant improvement as the one serviceable generator of the electricity company has broken down.

16. The United Nations country team is initiating the first joint programme on AIDS in Guinea-Bissau and assisting the country in managing a Global Fund grant of $44 million. The country team will continue its efforts to strengthen the supply chain system of antiretroviral drugs and other AIDS-related medical items. Activities relating to the housing census are proceeding, as planned, with the support of UNFPA and UNDP. A pilot survey was conducted in December and the final census operation is planned for June 2008; the project has already encountered a $1.5 million funding gap that must be filled.

17. Following the Security Council's decision on 11 December 2007 to support the inclusion of Guinea-Bissau in the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission, the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission met in New York on 19 December, and agreed to include Guinea-Bissau in its agenda and set up a country-specific meeting group on Guinea-Bissau under the chairmanship of the Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations. From 22 to 28 January 2008, a mission of the Peacebuilding Commission, led by Ambassador Maria Viotti of Brazil as Chairperson of the country-specific meeting, visited Guinea-Bissau to initiate discussions with the Government, national stakeholders and international partners on priority areas for assistance to be included in a peacebuilding strategic framework for the country. The mission also examined time deadlines for the development of the framework and the establishment of a national steering committee. On 20 February, the Prime Minister made a presentation at the second formal meeting of the country-specific configuration on Guinea-Bissau in New York on his country's peacebuilding priorities and challenges. These included reform of public administration, consolidation of the rule of law and security sector reforms, promotion of vocational training and youth employment and support for vulnerable groups.

18. The Prime Minister also submitted a number of quick-impact project proposals to the Peacebuilding Commission in the areas of health, energy, the forthcoming legislative elections and youth, with an emphasis on job creation. Those quick-impact projects are under consideration by the Commission for implementation towards the end of March 2008. They would be carried out in tandem with the ongoing calendar of activities for engagement between the Government and the Commission, which will lead to the establishment of a comprehensive strategic framework for peacebuilding in Guinea-Bissau, expected to be finalized by June 2008. The strategic framework for Guinea-Bissau will draw on priorities already established under existing key national framework documents, such as the poverty reduction strategy paper, the security sector strategy plan and the United Nations development assistance framework. At the end of the country-specific meeting, it was agreed to advise the Secretary-General to declare Guinea-Bissau eligible for

assistance from the Peacebuilding Fund. On 11 March 2008, I wrote to the Chairman of the Peacebuilding Commission, informing him of my decision to declare Guinea-Bissau eligible to receive funding from the Peacebuilding Fund.

19. A second high-level delegation from the Peacebuilding Commission is expected to visit Guinea-Bissau early in April 2008. The objectives of that mission would include further consultations with the Government and national stakeholders, and field trips to the regions and provinces of Guinea-Bissau to acquire first-hand knowledge of the situation in the country and current peacebuilding activities and challenges. The Government and the Peacebuilding Commission will also be working on the presentation of a Government priority plan to fit in with the overall peacebuilding strategic framework.

IV. Military and security aspects

20. The security sector reform programme was officially launched at a ceremony at the National Assembly on 23 January 2008. In his speech, the Chief of the General Staff expressed support for the restructuring and modernization of the armed forces, but warned that the reforms should not result in the impoverishment of beneficiaries as such a situation could make them vulnerable to manipulation. The financial convention between the European Commission and the Government for the security sector reform/disarmament, demobilization and reintegration project costing €7.7 million was signed on 22 January 2008. A major awareness campaign on security sector reform was conducted in all regions of the country in December 2007 and January 2008. The events were attended by members of the security sector reform Technical Coordinating Committee, the armed forces reconciliation commission, civil society and UNOGBIS, among others. The independent census of active personnel in the armed forces, which is funded by UNDP, started in mid-February and is expected to be completed by the end of March. The information will be vital for arriving at an accurate figure of active personnel. Three experts funded by the European Commission, under the Instrument for Stability security sector reform project in Guinea-Bissau, are providing advisory services to the Ministry of Defence.

21. The Governments of Guinea-Bissau and Portugal co-hosted the Lisbon International Conference on Drug Trafficking on 19 December 2007 to mobilize $19 million for the anti-narcotics programme developed by the Government of Guinea-Bissau, with the assistance of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and facilitated by UNOGBIS. The conference raised $6.7 million which will allow for the implementation of emergency actions planned for 2008. On 22 January 2008, UNOGBIS organized a debriefing and follow-up meeting in Bissau, which was attended by Government representatives, international partners and representatives of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. The meeting agreed that the Minister of Justice and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime should urgently find an efficient strategic framework to implement the anti-narcotics programme. Synergies and operational cooperation in activities planned under the anti-narcotics programme and the ongoing security sector and judicial reform were discussed at the meeting organized by the European Commission in Brussels on 28 January. Within the framework of the Government-UNDP-United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime project and a Government of Brazil-United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime initiative, six officers, drawn from the Guinea-

Bissau judicial police, INTERPOL and the public order police left for Brazil to attend a six-month training course organized by the federal police of Brazil. The judicial police, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and UNOGBIS experts visited a number of facilities in Bissau and surrounding areas with the objective of identifying suitable venues for the installation of a temporary detention centre. In addition to assigning one senior adviser and one senior ad hoc adviser to Bissau in November 2007, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime will appoint a project manager by March 2008, to coordinate its expanding activities in Guinea-Bissau.

22. Meanwhile, on 25 February 2008, Spain and Guinea-Bissau signed an agreement to jointly conduct air and sea patrols along Guinea-Bissau's maritime borders with the objective of combating human trafficking.

23. The National Institute for Educational Studies and Research facilitated workshops with civil society and the military on 19 and 21 December 2007 to raise awareness on issues linked to small arms and light weapons, and to elicit suggestions on possible arms collection schemes. The activities were carried out within the framework of the workplan of the National Commission against the Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons. A mission from the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat travelled to Guinea-Bissau from 21 to 25 January 2008 to assess the progress made by the Commission towards drawing up a plan of action, which includes a pilot project. National non-governmental organizations linked to the West Africa Action Network on Small Arms are also supporting activities to combat the proliferation of small arms and light weapons.

24. In January 2008, the authorities arrested two Mauritanians in Bissau who were wanted by the Mauritanian authorities for the alleged murder of four French citizens in Mauritania. The Mauritanians, who claimed to be members of Al-Qaida, were subsequently extradited to Mauritania. Following that development, the Government expressed serious concern about an emerging threat of terrorism in the country. On 22 February, my Representative met with the Chairperson of the Counter-Terrorism Committee to underline the concern of the Government on this matter.

V. Human rights aspects

25. UNOGBIS human rights officers have noted that the country's serious water shortages have especially affected prisoners, who are detained in deplorable conditions and face a lack of food, poor sanitation and abuse of preventive detention provisions. The International Federation for Human Rights dispatched a team to Guinea-Bissau from 7 to 16 January 2008 to look into reports of a deteriorating environment for human rights and press freedom, particularly with regard to reporting on drug issues. This follows allegations that journalists have been threatened for reporting on suspected drug trafficking activities in the country.

VI. Observations and recommendations

26. The Government of Guinea-Bissau has continued to make tangible progress in engaging the international community in its efforts to put in place the urgent

reforms necessary for sustainable political and economic stabilization, with a view to offering its citizens a better life. In this regard, I welcome the inclusion of Guinea-Bissau in the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission and the signing of the emergency post-conflict assistance programme with IMF. Both developments demonstrate the renewed commitment of the international community to support Guinea-Bissau's peacebuilding efforts.

27. I am encouraged at the momentum generated since the country was placed on the Commission's agenda on 19 December 2007. This positive outcome has been the culmination of months of hard work and commitment on the part of the Government of Guinea-Bissau, working in close collaboration with its partners, including the United Nations system, the European Union, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries, among others. The Commission's engagement with Guinea-Bissau will provide valuable assistance in post-conflict reconstruction and the consolidation of peace. Now that Guinea-Bissau has been declared eligible for funding from the Peacebuilding Fund, I urge the Government and its partners to engage actively to move the process forward, especially in setting up the national steering committee and implementing quick-impact projects. I commend all the partners who have demonstrated their interest and readiness to work with the country to promote sustainable stability, and appeal to the international community as a whole for continued and increased support for Guinea-Bissau's multifaceted peacebuilding challenges.

28. It is important that the various initiatives to assist the country dovetail so that limited resources are used to maximum effect. The question of process and coordination between the Government and donors therefore needs to be addressed if the resources are to be effectively and efficiently used to achieve the expected results. I have directed my Representative, together with the United Nations country team, to spare no efforts in ensuring the needed synergies in this regard. It is also imperative that the Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding be nationally owned. In this regard, I urge the Peacebuilding Support Office to ensure wide consultation with all stakeholders, including civil society, during the elaboration of the Strategic Framework.

29. As noted in my last report to the Council, the legislative elections of 2008 will be a major benchmark for the state of democratic governance in the country. I encourage the authorities to set a date for the polls as a first step towards creating a climate of confidence in the credibility of the process. I urge the international community to provide resources for the elections, including resources to cover arrears from past democratic elections. I have directed the United Nations to continue providing the necessary technical support in the preparations for the elections.

30. I would also like to commend the authorities for launching the security sector reform process, which constitutes a key element in the Government's priorities under the auspices of a wider public administration reform programme. This is a long-term and complex process which will require cooperation among all stakeholders, including international cooperation partners. The reforms represent key structural policies whose successful implementation would affect the ability of the State to deliver on its poverty reduction strategy.

31. A comprehensive and effective security sector reform process in Guinea-Bissau would, furthermore, serve as the long-term framework for a concerted strategy against drug trafficking in the country. I therefore appeal to the international community to provide enhanced support and training for Guinea-Bissau's law enforcement and criminal justice system within the wider framework of security sector reform and the fight against organized crime, drug trafficking and terrorism. I commend the Government and international partners for the successful organization, in December 2007, of the Lisbon International Conference on Drug Trafficking in Guinea-Bissau. I urge the Government and international partners to work together to formulate an effective follow-up process to the Lisbon Conference, especially aimed at mobilizing additional resources for the comprehensive implementation of the operational plan. I believe also that integration of Guinea-Bissau's national anti-narcotic effort in a subregional approach is essential and I look forward to a positive outcome from the planned ECOWAS regional conference on drug trafficking in West Africa.

32. Guinea-Bissau has made important progress in the period under review but much more remains to be done to make the process of reform irreversible. Success will depend not only on continuing collaboration between the Government and its partners, but also, above all, on the people of Guinea-Bissau themselves demonstrating the resolve to place national interest above narrow personal or partisan ambitions.

33. I should like to conclude by commending the staff of UNOGBIS, under the leadership of my Representative, Shola Omoregie, as well as the personnel of the entire United Nations country team, for the important work they continue to carry out in Guinea-Bissau, often under challenging circumstances.

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Belgium, Burkina Faso, China, Costa Rica, Croatia, France, Italy, Panama, Russian Federation, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America: draft resolution

The Security Council,

Reaffirming that terrorism in all forms and manifestations constitutes one of the most serious threats to international peace and security and that any acts of terrorism are criminal and unjustifiable regardless of their motivations, whenever and by whomsoever committed and *remaining determined* to contribute further to enhancing the effectiveness of the overall effort to fight this scourge on a global level,

Recalling resolution 1373 (2001) of 28 September 2001, which established the Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC), and *recalling also* its other resolutions concerning threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts,

Recalling, in particular, resolution 1535 (2004) of 26 March 2004 and resolution 1787 (2007) of 10 December 2007, which pertain to the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED),

Recalling further its previous reviews of CTED contained in Statements by the President of the Security Council, S/PRST/2005/64 of 21 December 2005 and S/PRST/2006/56 of 20 December 2006, and *reaffirming* its conclusions therein,

Welcoming the revised Organizational plan for CTED submitted by its Executive Director (S/2008/80) and the recommendations contained therein,

Noting with appreciation CTED's emphasis on the guiding principles of cooperation, transparency and even-handedness, and its stated intention to adopt a more proactive communications strategy,

Underscoring the central role of the United Nations in the global fight against terrorism and welcoming the adoption by the General Assembly of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (A/60/288) of 8 September 2006 and the creation of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) to ensure overall coordination and coherence in the counter-terrorism efforts of the United Nations system,

Reminding States that they must ensure that any measures taken to combat terrorism comply with all their obligations under international law, and should adopt

such measures, in accordance with international law, in particular, international human rights, refugee, and humanitarian law and *recalling* that CTED should continue in accordance with its mandate, to advise the CTC on issues relating to such law in connection with the identification and implementation of effective measures to implement resolutions 1373 (2001) and 1624 (2005),

1. *Underlines* that the overarching goal of the CTC is to ensure the full implementation of resolution 1373 (2001) and *recalls* CTED's crucial role in supporting the Committee in the fulfilment of its mandate;

2. *Decides* that CTED will continue to operate as a special political mission under the policy guidance of the CTC for the period ending 31 December 2010 and *further decides* to conduct an interim review by 30 June 2009, and a comprehensive consideration of CTED's work prior to the expiration of its mandate;

3. *Welcomes and affirms* the endorsement by the CTC of the recommendations contained in the revised "Organizational plan for the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (S/2008/80)";

4. *Urges* CTED to continue strengthening its role in facilitating technical assistance for implementation of resolution 1373 (2001) aimed at increasing the capabilities of Member States in the fight against terrorism by addressing their counter-terrorism needs;

5. *Stresses* the importance of a tailored dialogue among CTED, the CTC and Member States, including for the development of relevant implementation strategies by Member States, and *encourages* the CTC and CTED to arrange meetings with Member States in various formats;

6. *Urges* CTED also to intensify cooperation with relevant international, regional and subregional organizations with a view to enhancing Member States' capacity to fully implement resolution 1373 (2001) and to facilitate the provision of technical assistance;

7. *Encourages* CTED to continue providing the necessary support for the work of the CTC with Member States towards comprehensive implementation of resolution 1624 (2005), as set out in paragraph 6 of that resolution;

8. *Welcomes* also the briefing by CTED's Executive Director, looks forward to the "Global Implementation Survey of resolution 1373 (2001)", and *directs* the CTC to submit an annual report on the implementation of this resolution, with its observations and recommendations;

9. *Requests* the CTC, in addition to the report requested in paragraph 8, to report orally, through its Chairman, at least every 180 days to the Council on the overall work of the CTC and CTED, and, as appropriate, in conjunction with the reports by the Chairmen of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999) and the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), and encourages informal briefings for all interested Member States;

10. *Reiterates* the need to enhance ongoing cooperation among the CTC, the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999), and the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), as well as their respective groups of experts, including through, as appropriate, enhanced information sharing, coordinated visits to countries, technical assistance and other issues of relevance to

all three committees, and *expresses its intention* to provide guidance to the committees on areas of common interest in order better to coordinate counter-terrorism efforts;

11. *Welcomes* and *emphasizes* the importance of CTED's readiness to participate actively in and support all relevant activities under the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy including within CTITF, established to ensure overall coordination and coherence in the counter-terrorism efforts of the United Nations system.

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Security Council

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Sixteenth progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Liberia

I. Introduction

1. By its resolution 1777 (2007) of 20 September 2007, the Security Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) until 30 September 2008 and requested me to monitor and report on the core benchmarks outlined in my report of 8 August 2007 (S/2007/479) by 20 March 2008. The present report provides an update on major developments in Liberia, including progress made in meeting the benchmarks for the drawdown phase of the UNMIL consolidation, drawdown and withdrawal plan.

II. Major developments since September 2007

A. Political situation

2. The overall political situation in Liberia remained stable during the reporting period. On 28 January, in her State of the Republic annual address to the legislature, President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf stated that the country had an economic growth rate of 9 per cent and that revenue collection for the first 11 months of 2007 amounted to $163.3 million, which surpassed the projected annual target of $152.5. The President also advised that the World Bank and the African Development Bank had cleared over $671 million of the $4.8 billion debt arrears of Liberia and that the Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund had agreed to a financing arrangement that would forgive some $920 million of Liberia's debts. In addition, the President stated that considerable progress had been made in rebuilding infrastructure and delivering basic services. She underscored the need for a comprehensive constitutional review, which would address, inter alia, decentralization, land reform and term limits for the President and legislators. She also stressed the importance of creating a new Liberia, which would replace the divisions, marginalization and exclusions of the past with inclusiveness, equitable opportunities and the empowerment of all Liberians.

3. In further efforts to foster political and ethnic reconciliation, President Johnson-Sirleaf attended a national peace festival in Monrovia on 2 January, where, together with George Weah, former presidential candidate for the Congress for Democratic Change, she lit a torch for peace and highlighted the need for national

reconciliation. On 28 January, the President announced her intention to pardon George Koukou, former Speaker of the National Transitional Legislative Assembly, who was on trial for treason. However, she stated that the trial of two other individuals accused of treason should continue.

4. On 7 October 2007, the Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, Angela Merkel, visited Liberia, where she pledged an additional €4 million towards Liberia's development programme and promised the continued support of Germany for Liberia's efforts to obtain multilateral debt relief. On 21 February, the President of the United States of America, George W. Bush, visited Liberia, where he held discussions with President Johnson-Sirleaf on the progress being made in the areas of health care, education, social services and infrastructural development in the country. This was the first visit by a United States President to the country in 30 years. President Bush pledged the continued support of his Government for peacekeeping and reconstruction efforts in Liberia, as well as for the security sector reform programme of the country. He also announced that his Government would provide one million textbooks for schoolchildren, as well as desks and chairs for 10,000 students for the next academic year.

5. In September 2007, the draft asset freeze act, which was submitted to the legislature in July 2007, was rejected by the House of Representatives on the grounds that its provisions violated the Liberian Constitution. In response, the President reiterated her commitment to the principles of the proposed act, and affirmed that she would pursue other options in conformity with the laws of the country to implement resolution 1532 (2004), by which the Council requested States to freeze the assets of senior officials of the regime of the former President of Liberia, Charles Taylor. The draft act had sought to provide for the freezing, seizure or confiscation of assets owned by those individuals listed by the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1521 (2003) concerning Liberia, as well as those individuals who had derived illegal benefits from public positions or services.

6. The trial of Charles Gyude Bryant, former Chairman of the National Transitional Government of Liberia, who was charged with economic sabotage for misappropriating $1.3 million, continued during the reporting period. On 3 March, the Minister of Justice announced on national radio that the Government had failed to reach an out-of-court settlement with Mr. Bryant to discontinue his trial in exchange for the return of the misappropriated funds. The trial of Edwin Snowe, former Speaker of the House of Representatives, who was indicted for the theft of some $1 million of public funds from the Liberia Petroleum Refining Company during his tenure as Managing Director, also continued during the reporting period.

7. Relations between the executive branch of the Government and the legislature continued to improve. During the reporting period, the legislature passed several important bills, including the Governance Commission Act. The legislature is currently reviewing the Anti-corruption Commission Act, the Code of Conduct Act, an act amending the Investment Incentives and Revenues Codes, and an act to amend the Penal Law. During the period under review, the Judiciary Committee of the House of Representatives began public hearings to investigate allegations made in January 2007 by the former House Speaker, Mr. Snowe, that members of the House had received $5,000 inducements from the executive branch of Government to sign a resolution calling for his removal. At the hearing on 3 March, Mr. Snowe

provided audio recordings in which four legislators allegedly admitted receiving $5,000 each to remove him as Speaker.

8. UNMIL continued to support Government efforts to restructure the political party system. In this regard, on 18 and 19 March, in collaboration with the Governance Commission, the National Elections Commission, the International Republican Institute and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), UNMIL facilitated a two-day workshop on political party system reform for representatives of political parties and members of the legislature.

B. Security situation

9. The overall security situation in Liberia remained calm and stable. However, during the reporting period, several violent civil disturbances took place on rubber plantations. On 17 November 2007, a Belgian manager of the Liberia Agricultural Company rubber plantation in Buchanan, Grand Bassa County, was shot dead. The shooting occurred following the signing of an agreement between the Government and the Company for the latter to acquire land surrounding the plantation. On 24 January, five unidentified men burned three houses and killed one resident in Zinakpah village on the plantation.

10. On 22 November 2007, during a student march to protest inadequate facilities and education materials at the main school on Guthrie rubber plantation, protestors destroyed rubber-tapping equipment and damaged two houses owned by the plantation management. On 16 January, the plantation workers staged a demonstration to protest delays in the payment of salaries and the non-provision of social services by the interim management team. On 24 January, the interim management team, which was constituted by the Rubber Planters' Association of Liberia, was suspended as a result of continued tensions on the plantation.

11. On 5 December 2007, workers at the Firestone Rubber Plantation went on strike to protest the non-payment of promised salary increases by the Company management and the alleged unwillingness of the Government to recognize the elected members of the workers' union. The strike action turned violent on 6 December 2007, when 150 workers, armed with cutlasses, axes and single barrel shotguns, blocked access to roads on the plantation, looted the health centre, burned down offices and destroyed company property. UNMIL and the Liberian National Police responded to restore calm. However, tensions ceased only after the Supreme Court issued a ruling upholding the validity of the workers' union elections.

12. Other significant security-related developments during the reporting period included violent protests by various groups. On 17 September 2007, some 150 servicemen of the former Armed Forces of Liberia, the Special Security Service and the Liberian National Police demonstrated in Monrovia over the non-payment of outstanding benefits. They obstructed traffic and threw stones at an UNMIL police vehicle, damaging its windshield. Also on 16 and 17 January 2008, a group of former personnel of the Armed Forces of Liberia staged a violent protest against the demolition of illegal structures in the area surrounding the Barclay Training Centre in Monrovia. Five Liberian National Police officers were injured by stones thrown by the protesters.

13. On 16 October 2007, a crowd, which had gathered at the Buchanan police station in Grand Bassa County to demand the release of three murder suspects, turned violent. On 13 February, a police station in Tappita, Nimba County, was burned by a mob demanding the release of a murder suspect. These incidents were effectively managed by the Liberian National Police assisted by UNMIL.

14. Continued criminal activities, including armed robbery and rape, particularly in Monrovia and its environs, generated a lack of public confidence in the ability of the Liberian National Police to effectively perform its duties. To address the situation, UNMIL increased the number of mobile and foot patrols in the high crime areas of Monrovia. In addition, in December 2007, the Mission temporarily deployed 37 United Nations police advisers and staff officers to reinforce UNMIL/ Liberian National Police patrols in Monrovia.

15. During the reporting period, UNMIL assisted the National Security Council with the development of a national security strategy and operational plan. The strategy focuses on coordinating information among law enforcement and security agencies, as well as strengthening community and police cooperation through information-sharing. The Minister of Justice is also leading efforts to improve police community relations. In this regard, the Ministry of Justice and the Liberian National Police provided cell phones to several residents in Monrovia to enhance their ability to provide timely information on criminal activities in their communities.

16. The security situation along the borders with Sierra Leone, Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea remained stable during the reporting period. UNMIL continued to conduct several operations to deter possible cross-border movement of weapons and recruitment of mercenaries, as well as to reassure the local population and foster better coordination among security agencies deployed in the border areas. The Mission conducted regular concurrent patrols with the Guinean armed forces along the Liberian-Guinean border in "Operation Seskin". Similar concurrent patrols were conducted along the Liberian-Sierra Leonean border with the Sierra Leone armed forces in "Operation Loko". In addition, special operations were conducted along the Sierra Leone-Liberia border during the August 2007 presidential and parliamentary elections in Sierra Leone. UNMIL also continued to conduct coordinated patrols with the United Nations Operations in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) to monitor the security situation along the Liberian-Ivorian border.

III. Mission deployment

A. Military component

17. As of 1 March, the UNMIL troop strength stood at 12,948, out of an authorized strength of 15,125. During the period under review, UNMIL continued to provide security throughout Liberia. The Mission undertook several cordon and search operations to retrieve weapons, extended support to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) community arms collection for development programme, carried out air and ground patrols, especially along Liberia's borders and assisted in the rehabilitation of roads and bridges. In addition, the Mission embarked on a number of humanitarian activities, including the rehabilitation and

building of schools, the construction of parks and the provision of free medical services.

18. UNMIL also continued to provide security to the Special Court for Sierra Leone. The quick reaction force of the Mission conducted "Exercise Blue Fish" from 8 to 12 October 2007 and "Exercise Green Horizon", with the support of the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces and the Sierra Leone Police, from 3 to 7 December 2007, in order to reinforce security at the Special Court. Given that the mandate of the United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone (UNIOSIL) is expected to expire on 30 September 2008, UNMIL is taking steps to ensure that its military guard force assigned to the Special Court for Sierra Leone is provided with adequate administrative and logistical support for its operations after the departure of UNIOSIL.

B. Police component

19. As at 1 March, the police strength of the Mission stood at 1,194 officers, out of an authorized ceiling of 1,240 officers, which includes 564 United Nations police advisers, 603 officers in five formed police units, 21 corrections officers and 6 immigration officers. On 18 September 2007, the United States deployed four police specialists to the Liberian National Police headquarters. It also deployed on 7 December 2007 a project manager to oversee the development of the Emergency Response Unit.

IV. Status of implementation of the mandate of the Mission

A. Rebuilding the Liberian National Police

20. As indicated in my last report (S/2007/479), UNMIL achieved its initial target of providing basic training for 3,500 police officers by 30 June 2007. To date, 3,662 officers have graduated from the National Police Academy. The first all-female class, comprising 110 police recruits, graduated in December 2007, bringing the total number of women in the police force to 361 (10 per cent). On 14 January, the thirty-third class of 150 recruits, including 115 women, some of whom have completed the special Ministry of Education/Liberian National Police/United Nations Police educational support programme, commenced training. In addition, several advanced programmes designed to strengthen the supervisory and specialized capacities of personnel of the Liberian National Police and Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization were completed. The Federal Republic of Germany has donated €1 million to the Liberian National Police to support its further training.

21. The first class of 90 officers, including one woman, of the Emergency Response Unit has commenced training. A second class is expected to begin training in July. It is envisaged that the first 200 officers of the 500-strong Emergency Response Unit will become operational by July 2009. The United States and Ireland are providing $5 million and $1.4 million respectively to the Government of Liberia for the development of the Emergency Response Unit.

22. Some 90 per cent of Liberian National Police officers authorized to be deployed to the counties have been deployed. Nevertheless, county operations

continue to be hampered by the lack of basic infrastructure and police equipment, including vehicles and communications; a lack of funds to procure fuel for electric generators and vehicles, where available; and the persistent absence of officers from their posts. In order to address the high rate of absenteeism and other disciplinary matters within the police force, four experienced United Nations police specialists have been deployed to UNMIL to serve as professional standards advisers. In addition, steps are being taken to revise the police duty manual, streamline the operational framework for the Police Standards and Practices Unit and verify the numbers and locations of Liberian National Police personnel in order to correct the payroll.

23. The Government is receiving support from its international partners to address the logistical challenges facing the Liberian National Police. As a result of this assistance, police stations in Harper in Maryland County, Kakata in Margibi County and Gbarnga in Bong County have been renovated and equipped. The construction of the county police headquarters in Zwedru in Grand Gedeh County, Barclayville in Grand Kru County and Harper in Maryland County, as well as a rural police station in Sanniquellie in Nimba County, have been completed and handed over to the Liberian National Police, while county police headquarters in River Gee and River Cess counties are in the process of being constructed. The renovation of the female dormitory and offices and the construction of a new male dormitory and classrooms at the National Police Training Academy have also been completed.

24. With assistance from UNMIL quick-impact projects, the reconstruction and rehabilitation of police stations in Gbah in Bomi County, Bopolu in Gbarpolu County, Toe Town in Grand Gedeh County, Foya and Kolahun in Lofa County, Ganta in Nimba County and Webbo in River Gee have been completed. In addition, the construction and rehabilitation of police stations in Sinje in Grand Cape Mount County, Morweh and Neuzen in River Cess County and AFC-Khan Town in Sinoe County are under way. Belgium and Germany are also providing funds for the construction of police barracks in nine counties, including Lofa, Grand Cape Mount, Nimba, Grand Gedeh, River Gee, Maryland, Bong, River Cess and Grand Kru. Notwithstanding these efforts, many police stations still require urgent rehabilitation.

25. In February, a newly constructed immigration office funded by UNMIL quick-impact projects was handed over to the Government in Ganta, Nimba County. Work will soon commence on two other immigration stations located at Bolongodou Port in Lofa County and Geplaken Border Port in River Gee County. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has agreed to construct immigration border posts in Yekepa Port in Nimba County, Bo Waterside Port in Grand Cape Mount County, Harper in Maryland County and Voinjama in Lofa County. Some 28 immigration border posts still require infrastructure and equipment support.

26. The Netherlands Immigration Service, the Ghana Immigration Service and UNMIL are providing training to personnel of the Bureau for Immigration and Naturalization. Currently, four immigration officers are undergoing basic training at the Ghana Immigration Service Academy. In addition, the Government of France has donated two vehicles, five motorcycles, computers and uniforms to strengthen the capacity of the Bureau along the Liberia-Côte d'Ivoire border, while the International Organization for Migration has donated equipment to assist with

immigration services at the Roberts International Airport. The Bureau has estimated that it will need $2.7 million for the deactivation of its officers. Currently, only 727 of the 1,228 Bureau for Immigration and Naturalization officers meet the basic eligibility requirements for enlistment in the Liberian security services.

B. Training, restructuring and reform of the Armed Forces of Liberia

27. The United States continued to lead international support for the training and restructuring of the 2,000-strong Armed Forces of Liberia. During the period under review, it made significant headway in training new recruits. On 7 September 2007, a second batch of 502 recruits graduated from the Barclay Training Centre in Monrovia, while a third batch consisting of 485 recruits graduated from Camp Ware on 11 January, bringing the total number of trained recruits to 1,124. On 14 January 2008, graduates began attending an advanced infantry individual training course at Camp Ware. Training of the fourth batch of 525 recruits, including 25 women, commenced on 8 March at Camp Ware.

28. On 10 December, three rifle companies of the First Infantry Battalion of the Armed Forces of Liberia were activated at a ceremony presided over by President Johnson-Sirleaf. Three officers from Benin, Ghana and Nigeria were seconded to the Liberian Ministry of Defence to assist in the command and control of those units. Meanwhile, some 15 Armed Forces of Liberia personnel are undergoing officer and specialist training at Nigerian military institutions. Several officers have already benefited from specialist training in China, Germany and the United States.

C. Development of a national security strategy and architecture

29. During the reporting period, a national security strategy containing proposals for an accountable security architecture and a regulatory framework was developed. The strategy focuses on improving the coordination and oversight of multiagency security activities, outlining the statutory instruments that govern these activities, and providing for the accountability, sustainability, financing and operational efficacy of these agencies. A draft implementation strategy is also being developed.

D. Reintegration of ex-combatants

30. In December 2007, UNDP and the National Commission on Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration and Rehabilitation, in collaboration with UNMIL, began implementing a one-year reintegration and rehabilitation programme for a final group of some 8,700 ex-combatants registered under the disarmament, demobilization, rehabilitation and reintegration programme, who have not yet benefited from any reintegration and rehabilitation programme. The Government of Norway has provided $7 million to implement the programme, which is expected to enhance the employability of beneficiaries through market-relevant training, apprenticeships or job placement.

31. UNMIL continued to collect and destroy residual weapons and ammunition voluntarily surrendered or discovered through search operations. Since the end of the disarmament and demobilization programme in 2005, a total of 884 weapons,

1,754 pieces of unexploded ordnance, 108,838 rounds of ammunition and 12,002 assorted spares and miscellaneous parts have been collected and destroyed by UNMIL. The UNDP community arms collection programme has collected 354 rifles, 40,141 rounds of ammunition, 967 spare parts and 872 pieces of unexploded ordnance since its launch in January 2006.

E. Consolidation of State authority

32. Progress in restoring and consolidating State authority throughout the country continued at a slow pace. The county support teams, which were established to ensure a coherent and consolidated United Nations approach to supporting the Government of Liberia at the county level, continued to meet on a monthly basis in all 15 counties to develop action plans to address the needs of each county.

33. During the period under review, the Government, with the support of the United Nations and other international partners, organized a series of consultations at the district and county levels to determine priorities for incorporation into the poverty reduction strategy of the country. This Strategy is expected to shape the national recovery and development agenda over the next three years. During the consultations, all counties highlighted roads and basic infrastructure as their top priority needs. Education, water and local economic development issues were also identified as major priorities.

34. During the reporting period, delays were experienced in rehabilitating county administrative buildings owing to the logistical and capacity constraints of implementing partners. Of the 11 buildings identified for rehabilitation, only four structures in Montserrado, Margibi, River Cess and River Gee Counties were completed and handed over to the Government. The rehabilitation of the administrative building in Grand Bassa County was also completed with funds provided by USAID. The rehabilitation and construction of three administrative buildings in Gbarpolu, Bomi and Grand Kru Counties are currently ongoing. Notwithstanding the progress being made in rehabilitating these structures, the work of the county officials and government line ministry representatives continues to be seriously hampered by the lack of communications and office equipment, as well as accommodation, vehicles and good roads.

35. Between March and October 2007, some 1,200 local government officials representing all 15 counties benefited from civic education training, which was jointly conducted by the Government, the United Nations, non-governmental organizations and donors. The training focused on leadership, national identity, transparency, accountability, human rights, the Millennium Development Goals, peacebuilding and reconciliation.

36. The United Nations country team and UNMIL are assisting the Liberia Institute for Statistics and Geo-Information Services with its preparations to conduct a national census from 21 to 27 March. It will be the first census to be conducted by the Government of Liberia since 1984. UNMIL has trained 156 field officers on the use of the global positioning system and has provided topographic and satellite maps to the Institute. UNMIL will also provide logistical support to facilitate the census process.

F. Promoting efficient management of natural resources

37. As part of the Government efforts to regain control over and efficiently manage the natural resources of the country, the Forestry Development Authority has signed a management contract with a Swiss firm aimed at discouraging the illegal production of timber and ensuring that exported forest products meet international standards. The process of submitting the 10 core regulations of the Authority for public review has also been completed. To date, some 85 local and foreign firms have indicated interest in participating in commercial logging. In the meantime, the Government has set up an inter-ministerial forestry concessions committee to, inter alia, review concession agreements, approve reports of the concessions bid evaluation panel and prepare an annual concessions plan for its approval.

38. Liberia resumed exporting rough diamonds in September 2007. In November 2007, Liberia attended its first Kimberley Process Certification Scheme plenary in Brussels. Meanwhile, the Government continued its efforts to reorganize the diamond sector by converting the Government Diamonds Office into the Office of Precious Minerals, and the Presidential Task Force on Diamonds into the Liberian Diamond Board. It also completed a draft mineral policy and is working towards the establishment of a mining cadastre system.

39. UNMIL continued to support the efforts of the Government to re-establish its control and provide social services on Liberia's rubber plantations, as recommended by the joint Government of Liberia/UNMIL Rubber Plantation Task Force. In this regard, emergency repairs have been undertaken on the access roads leading to the Sinoe Rubber Plantation, which has been illegally operated by ex-combatants for several years. These repairs are expected to facilitate the deployment of UNMIL troops on the plantation and enable the establishment of an interim management team. On 1 December 2007, the Cavalla Rubber Plantation was handed over to its legally recognized owners, bringing an end to the tenure of the interim management team established in May 2006.

40. During the reporting period, the Mission's Environment and Natural Resources Unit provided technical support to the Environmental Protection Agency for the review of the national environmental policy and legislative framework, as well as environmental impact assessment regulations. In addition, as part of its efforts to strengthen the capacity of the Environmental Protection Agency, UNMIL trained 30 personnel of the Agency as environmental inspectors. The trained personnel will soon be assigned to the counties.

G. Promotion of human rights and the rule of law

Promotion of human rights

41. Although the overall human rights situation in the country continues to improve, deficiencies in the justice system still pose serious challenges to efforts to promote and protect human rights. These deficiencies include recurring absenteeism and reports of corrupt practices involving judicial and law enforcement officials; detention facilities that are below minimum human rights standards; large numbers of pretrial detainees awaiting trial for extended periods; and insufficient numbers of

qualified corrections officers. As a result of these problems, protests by inmates increased during the reporting period.

42. Despite the enactment of the Rape Amendment Act in 2006, the incidence of rape of women and girls continues to be high. Moreover, the prosecution of cases of sexual violence is hampered by deficiencies in the criminal justice system and the regular dismissal of cases owing to out-of-court settlements made between the victims and the perpetrators of the crimes.

43. The legislature is currently reviewing the Act to establish the independent national commission on human rights. With the passage of this Act and the appointment of the commissioners, the commission is expected to become fully functional. In the meantime, the Ministry of Justice is making preparations to develop a national human rights action plan.

Support for the judicial and correction system

44. The reform of the judicial and corrections system continues to be slow. The justice system remains constrained by the lack of infrastructure, inadequate numbers of qualified judicial and legal officers, lack of capacity to process cases, poor case management, inadequately trained court staff, low salaries, lack of a legal and judicial reform policy framework and a legal regime that allows only Liberian citizens to be legal practitioners or judges. As a result of these shortcomings, many Liberians have little confidence in the justice system. UNMIL is working actively with the Ministry of Justice and the Supreme Court to try to address these deficiencies. The Mission is also an active participant in the working groups of the Liberia Reconstruction and Development Committee on governance and the rule of law, and has advocated for the inclusion of legal and judicial reforms, including juvenile justice system reforms, in the poverty reduction strategy of Liberia.

45. During the reporting period, the Mission continued its monitoring, advisory and capacity-building activities. It used increasingly the services of national facilitators and provided training for national trainers who will assist in building the capacity of the legal and judicial system. Moreover, the Mission is supporting Government efforts to establish a law reform commission as a sustainable mechanism for law reform and development; establish a judicial training institute; reconstruct courthouses; create a national judicial database; reform the judicial scholarship scheme to attract qualified indigent students to the Louis Arthur Grimes School of Law of the University of Liberia; and review mechanisms related to judicial discipline, court fees, and bail bonds.

46. With respect to the corrections system, UNMIL continued to train personnel of the Bureau of Corrections and Rehabilitation to provide security at correctional facilities. So far, UNMIL has recruited and trained 209 corrections officers. Some 69 of these officers are currently undergoing practical training at corrections facilities, while 10 officers have completed a training-of-trainers programme. Some 29 corrections officers were deactivated during the first phase of a United States-funded deactivation process. Another 35 officers have been earmarked for deactivation during the second phase of the process.

47. Most correction facilities, including the Monrovia Central Prison, are either overcrowded or are operating at full capacity. The majority of prisoners are pretrial detainees who have been waiting for long periods for their cases to be heard in

court. In an effort to decongest the Monrovia Central Prison, a new block was constructed with funds provided by the United States and Norway. In addition, the recently renovated prison facility in Zwedru, Grand Gedeh County, has begun accepting sentenced prisoners. The Liberian National Police will be deployed to this facility shortly to further enhance security. UNMIL is currently making efforts to activate prison workshops and develop activities to rehabilitate prisoners.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission

48. Since my last report, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission has made significant progress in implementing its mandate. The Commission commenced public hearings nationwide in Monrovia on 8 January. President Johnson-Sirleaf, who addressed the opening of the hearings, called on Liberians to respond positively to the Commission requests to attend hearings and to provide truthful testimonies. The President also apologized to the people of Liberia on behalf of all Governments of Liberia for the acts that contributed to the conflict and reiterated the support of the Government for the Commission. Since the hearings started, a number of perpetrators and victims have appeared before the Commission to give accounts of the violations and abuses perpetrated or suffered during the war.

49. On 31 January, the Commission completed public hearings in Monrovia and began holding hearings in the counties. Some 30 witnesses are expected to testify in each county. On 12 and 18 February, respectively, the Commission began holding public hearings in Maryland and Grand Kru Counties. The Commission has so far received $4.2 million out of a projected operating budget of $9 million. UNMIL is working closely with the Commission to ensure the successful completion of its mandate.

H. Economic governance

50. The Government of Liberia continued to make progress in implementing the Governance and Economic Management Assistance Programme. In the last quarter of 2007, progress was made in installing internal control systems and new software in the Ministry of Finance, submitting the draft act on the establishment of an anti-corruption commission to the legislature, formulating a framework document for the Government's 10-year capacity development strategy and developing an enhanced communication strategy. In addition, during the reporting period, the Economic Governance Steering Committee approved the terms of reference for the long-term adviser to the Bureau of Customs and Excise and the Special Adviser to the Central Bank of Liberia. Experts were also recruited for key economic institutions, including the Bureau of Customs and Excise, the National Port Authority and the Central Bank of Liberia.

I. National recovery, reconstruction and development

51. The Ministry of Public Works, UNMIL, UNDP and the World Bank are jointly providing short-term employment opportunities for Liberians and repairing critical Mission supply routes through road rehabilitation projects. In addition, a number of community residents and ex-combatants are benefiting from the rehabilitation of secondary and feeder roads by UNMIL engineers. With the assistance of the World

Food Programme "Food support to local initiatives" programme and the Ministry of Public Works, UNMIL is also facilitating the employment of community residents in roadside brushing and other basic road repair works.

52. During the reporting period, President Johnson-Sirleaf launched the second phase of the emergency power programme, which will provide electricity to some parts of Monrovia and its environs.

53. In October 2007, I declared Liberia eligible to receive funding under the second window of the Peacebuilding Fund. As a result, $15 million was allocated for peacebuilding projects aimed at promoting national reconciliation and conflict management; peacebuilding and conflict resolution; and strengthening the State capacity for peace consolidation. While UNDP is responsible for administering the Fund, a joint steering committee, co-chaired by the Government and UNMIL, will be responsible for the review and approval of projects. The committee will be supported by an in-country technical advisory panel.

J. Humanitarian activities

54. Although the humanitarian situation in Liberia has continued to improve, the country still faces serious challenges, particularly in the health, education, food, and water and sanitation sectors. So far only 62 per cent of the $110 million needed to address the high priority humanitarian needs outlined in the Common Humanitarian Action Plan, including the delivery of basic social services, the provision of productive livelihoods for returnee communities and the strengthening of civil society and local authorities, has been received. During the reporting period, UNMIL organized a number of medical outreach activities, which provided medical treatment for some 24,000 patients.

55. During the period under review, UNHCR conducted a post-voluntary repatriation verification exercise, which revealed that 75,509 registered Liberian refugees are still residing in various countries in the subregion. There are also 10,327 refugees from Sierra Leone, Côte d'Ivoire and other countries residing in Liberia. The United Nations, in collaboration with the Economic Community of West African States and the Government of Liberia, is trying to find durable solutions for the integration of Sierra Leonean refugees in Liberia. The successful reintegration of returnees into communities continues to be a major challenge.

K. Gender

56. As part of the United Nations Gender Theme Group, UNMIL is supporting Government efforts to develop a national gender policy and to prepare a report on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in Liberia. Within the Mission, the Gender Advisory Unit provided gender training for peacekeeping personnel and developed a mission-wide action plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), as part of its internal mainstreaming function. The Unit also conducted capacity-building training on gender analysis and mainstreaming for Government ministries and agencies.

L. HIV/AIDS

57. The UNMIL HIV/AIDS Unit continued to collaborate with the Mission's integrated training cell to carry out HIV/AIDS awareness training and sensitization, as well as personal risk assessment sessions as part of the induction training for military, police, and civilian personnel. It also continued to promote HIV/AIDS awareness in Liberia, through its participation in a live UNMIL phone-in programme. In addition, the Unit conducted HIV/AIDS sensitization for 175 members of the Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd in Paynesville, a suburb of Monrovia. A similar sensitization programme was conducted for 1,111 recruits of the Armed Forces of Liberia and 67 corrections officers undergoing training at the National Police Academy.

M. Personnel conduct and discipline

58. The Mission's Conduct and Discipline Unit continued to work on developing strategies to prevent, identify, report and effectively respond to all categories of United Nations personnel misconduct. It also continued to emphasize the zero tolerance policy of the Secretary-General on sexual exploitation and abuse in its training and awareness-raising campaigns. Moreover, the Unit assisted the Government with the coordination of its national sexual exploitation and abuse and awareness campaign, which was launched in December 2006.

59. During the reporting period, three cases of sexual exploitation and abuse, 14 "category 1" (serious misconduct) and 101 "category 2" (minor misconduct) misconduct cases were reported. Investigations of the three cases of sexual exploitation and abuse are ongoing. UNMIL published a biannual bulletin on the status of reported cases in January 2008.

N. Public information

60. The UNMIL Public Information Office continued to support the priority programmes of the Mission, as well as those of the United Nations agencies, the Government of Liberia and civil society, aimed at consolidating peace and stability, encouraging reconciliation and promoting national recovery. The Mission organized a series of public outreach events and radio programmes on sexual exploitation and abuse, HIV/AIDS and the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. In addition, it organized workshops for senior editors and on creative writing, and development journalism, which has since led to the formation of the Liberian Association of Development Journalism. During the reporting period, UNMIL Radio developed and broadcast seven new programmes, including "Our teachers, our schools", in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and USAID, which focuses on improving the quality of education and "What's your problem?", a psychosocial counselling programme that addresses the issues of reconciliation and forgiveness.

V. Drawdown of the Mission

61. The consolidation phase of the UNMIL consolidation, drawdown and withdrawal plan formally ended on 31 December 2007. Some progress was made in meeting the indicators of progress identified under the four key benchmarks of security, the rule of law and governance, economic revitalization, and basic services and infrastructure during the consolidation phase. However, progress was slow in some areas, particularly in the strengthening of the justice sector, the training of the Armed Forces of Liberia, the development of a national security strategy and architecture, and the establishment of an independent national human rights commission. UNMIL will continue to monitor the progress made in meeting these benchmarks during the drawdown phase of the UNMIL consolidation, drawdown and withdrawal plan. The benchmarks for the drawdown phase, together with the indicators of progress, are provided in annex I to the present report.

A. Military component

62. Under resolution 1777 (2007), the Security Council approved my recommendation to reduce the military component of UNMIL by some 2,450 troops between October 2007 and September 2008. Accordingly, one infantry battalion from Namibia was withdrawn from UNMIL on 7 October 2007. A company from the Pakistani battalion was deployed to the vacated locations. On 8 February, one battalion from the Bangladeshi contingent commenced its withdrawal from UNMIL. A reduced Ghanaian battalion will cover the vacated area. Another battalion from Senegal will be repatriated in June 2008, to be replaced by a smaller battalion from Ethiopia. In addition, the Ghanaian and Nigerian battalions, which are currently being rotated, will be reduced by one company each. It is envisaged that by 30 September, some 2,450 troops will have been repatriated, leaving the Mission troop strength at 11,691.

B. Police component

63. In compliance with resolution 1777 (2007), the police component will begin its drawdown in April. It is expected that 498 police advisers will depart the Mission in seven stages between April 2008 and December 2010, bringing the police strength to 742 personnel by December 2010.

C. Civilian component

64. The Mission will continue to adjust its civilian component, as appropriate, to adapt to evolving priorities. In view of the progress made in the reintegration of ex-combatants and in the transition from the emergency humanitarian phase to the early recovery phase, the Mission has made adjustments to its reintegration, rehabilitation and recovery section, as well as to its humanitarian coordination section.

VI. Observations

65. The Government of Liberia continues to focus on the important priorities of ensuring economic recovery; obtaining forgiveness of the country's indebtedness; fighting corruption; implementing its interim poverty reduction strategy; revitalizing the agricultural sector; restoring basic services; rehabilitating basic infrastructure, including roads; and renovating and building schools, clinics, hospitals and administrative buildings. In addition, the Government is making progress in implementing the Governance and Economic Management Assistance Programme; reforming the security sector; regaining control and efficient management of its natural resources; strengthening the capacity of its institutions; and consolidating its authority throughout the country. It is also taking commendable steps to engage all Liberian stakeholders in the poverty reduction strategy process.

66. Despite these encouraging developments, a number of tasks that are critical to the sustainability of peace and stability still have to be fully implemented. These include the reform of the legal and judicial system, the reintegration of war-affected populations and the extension of the rule of law throughout the country. In addition, Liberia still faces significant reconstruction and development challenges, including pervasive poverty, food insecurity, high unemployment, massive illiteracy, poor infrastructure and the inadequate delivery of basic services, including potable water, health services and education. Moreover, in spite of the efforts of the Government, corruption still remains a major concern.

67. While significant progress has been made in the restructuring and training of the police, the deployment and operations of the force are still hampered by a lack of vehicles, communications equipment and accommodation. I appeal to donors to generously support the equipment and deployment needs of the Liberian National Police. I am pleased that the training of personnel of the new Armed Forces of Liberia is building momentum and that the training of the new police Emergency Response Unit has commenced. The Government should accelerate the development of its security strategy and architecture, which will enable it to set out a coherent road map for assuming security responsibility for the country.

68. A fair and effective judicial system is one key element in avoiding a return to conflict in Liberia. Although the steps that have been taken by the Government to reform the judicial sector and to strengthen the rule of law are encouraging, much more needs to be done. In this regard, the Government needs to address the long-standing structural challenges facing the justice sector by adopting a comprehensive approach and far-reaching reforms. In addition, a major overhaul of the judicial and corrections system is required to increase access to justice and to alleviate the unnecessary suffering of detainees and prisoners. I urge international partners to support the Government in this endeavour.

69. I am concerned about the high numbers of unemployed youth, including former combatants, who continue to pose a potential threat to stability in the country. It will be important for all stakeholders to work together to provide sustainable employment opportunities for the unemployed. I take this opportunity to express my appreciation to international partners and donors who are supporting reintegration and rehabilitation programmes for former combatants and creating employment opportunities for the people of Liberia.

70. The Government has made commendable efforts to regain control of diamond mining. However, additional measures will need to be taken to ensure that the diamond industry is effectively regulated. It will also be important for the Government to establish a computerized data bank for mining licences, review incentives and remuneration for the field staff of the Ministry of Lands, Mines and Energy and increase efforts to ensure that banking channels are used for all diamond transactions.

71. It is gratifying to note that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission has commenced its public hearings after almost six months of suspension of its work. I call on the people of Liberia to attend the hearings and provide the Commission with their testimonies. It is my hope that this process will form part of a broader national reconciliation process that will also address past human rights abuses. As the Commission still needs urgent financial assistance to complete its work, I call on members of the international community to provide funding for the Commission.

72. In conclusion, I wish to express my deep appreciation to all the troop- and police-contributing countries, as well as to ECOWAS, the African Union and the International Contact Group on Liberia, for their continued support in consolidating peace in Liberia. I would also like to extend my thanks to my new Special Representative, Ellen Margrethe Løj, her predecessor, Alan Doss, and all UNMIL military, police and civilian personnel, all development and humanitarian agencies, and the numerous bilateral donors and non-governmental organizations for their important contribution to the peace consolidation process in Liberia.

Annex I

Benchmarks for phase 2 of the consolidation, drawdown and withdrawal of UNMIL

Drawdown phase

Benchmarks	Indicators of progress
Security[a]	
Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) operational[b]	1st AFL battalion conducts squad/platoon level exercises with UNMIL
	1st AFL battalion conducts company level exercises with UNMIL
	Government of Liberia declares 1st AFL battalion operational
	2nd AFL battalion conducts squad/platoon level exercises with UNMIL
	2nd AFL battalion conducts company level exercises with UNMIL
	Government of Liberia declares 2nd AFL battalion operational
Liberia National Police operational	Nationwide implementation of administrative and operating procedures completed
	Oversight mechanism established
	500-member Emergency Response Unit operational
	Human resource quality improvement through officer competency validation/fitness certification by United Nations police (integrity and skill-based) with Inspector General of Police and Ministry of Justice
	Operational capacity improved through police infrastructure enhancement, logistics support and equipment provision at county police stations to ensure support for sustained Liberia National Police deployments and enhanced operational capacity
	Realignment of Liberia National Police county police station security coverage, inter alia, through reinforcement of Liberia National Police personnel in identified high-threat areas
National security strategy and architecture operational	National security strategy and architecture designed and fully implemented

	Security coordination mechanisms operational nationally and in each county
Security sector budgetary support enhanced	Government of Liberia progressively increases its annual budgetary allocation for security sector reform in national budget
Control and monitoring of movement across borders operational	Deactivation of non-qualified personnel from Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization completed
	Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization capacity increased through electronic tracking and monitoring of passengers at Roberts International Airport
	Trained officers present at 36 official international entry points and 36 outposts operational
Reintegration of ex-combatants	Rehabilitation and reintegration programme completed
Economic revitalization[c]	
Implementation of Governance and Economic Management Assistance Programme	Public finance management and governance reforms agreed with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) under the staff-monitored or successor programme completed
	Government spending limits observed in line with the budget targets agreed with IMF
	Transparent and accountable procedures for granting concessions (as recommended by the Economic Governance Steering Committee) implemented
	The Heavily Indebted Poor Countries initiative completion point reached
Revival of economic growth	Gross domestic product growth recovers in line with poverty reduction strategy projections
Strengthening State authority and management of natural resources	Rubber concessions renegotiated for major plantations and regulatory policies in the rubber plantation sector implemented
	National Forestry Law implemented
	Environmental Protection Agency operational nationwide
	Kimberley Process Certification Scheme compliance functioning effectively and monitored

Governance and rule of law[c]	
Justice sector reform	**Pretrial case review mechanism established and functioning**
	Law reform commission functioning
	Judicial-training institute established
	Accountability mechanisms established for money paid or entrusted to courts
	Legal advisory services available in each county
	Legally qualified public defenders available in each county
	Comprehensive review of the traditional court/justice systems completed
	Increase in numbers of students graduating annually from the law school
	Significant increase in ability of courts to dispose their caseload on time and in accordance with the law
Corrections reform	**Deactivation of corrections staff: phase I — pensionable age staff (65 years) or 25 years of service; phase II — staff failing a written exam**
	Proposals for changes in penal law with respect to corrections submitted to the Government of Liberia
	500 staff trained and deployed
	Operational correctional facilities in every county
Promotion and protection of human rights	**Truth and Reconciliation Commission submits report to legislature, fulfilling mandate**
	Independent National Commission on Human Rights functioning
	National Human Rights Action Plan developed and implementation started
Reconciliation progressing	**Nationwide conflict management processes and training to address long-standing social divides**
	Community-based recovery and reintegration programmes available for unemployed youth in high security-risk areas
	Strengthened political party system

	Constitutional reform
	Enhanced legislative capacity to review and pass laws
National institutions strengthened	County administration operational nationwide
Anti-corruption strategy	Anti-Corruption Commission established
Civil Service reform	Civil Service code of conduct in place
	100 positions filled under the Senior Executive Service
	Civil service strength right-sized and service conditions improved
Infrastructure and basic services[c]	
Rehabilitation of transport network	Main strategic routes repaired and maintained
	Steps taken to become compliant with the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code
Health services expanded	Minimum health package expanded and provided by 70 per cent of health facilities
	Enhanced and equipped services provided by the 354 existing functional health facilities
	Increase in skilled health workers deployed nationwide by 40 per cent
Access to quality education	Renovation of 33 primary and 6 secondary schools; new construction of 37 primary and 4 secondary schools nationwide
	Increased school enrolment and completion rate of 5 per cent annually, particularly of girls, nationwide
	Number of qualified teachers in schools increased by 10 per cent annually

[a] Core benchmarks: markers to measure progress in the achievement of the mandate and conditions needed to ensure a security "steady-state"; security "steady-state" is defined as the point at which the national security services and agencies are fully operational and primarily sustained with the Government of Liberia's own resources.

[b] "Operational" is defined as the existence of functional capabilities, with clear command structures and management; transparent, accountable and appropriate organizational structures; conducting continuous skills-based training and retraining; and having adequate logistical facilities, including financial resources, materials and communications. These capabilities are underpinned by a core doctrine/vision and are judged as nationally sustainable in the long run.

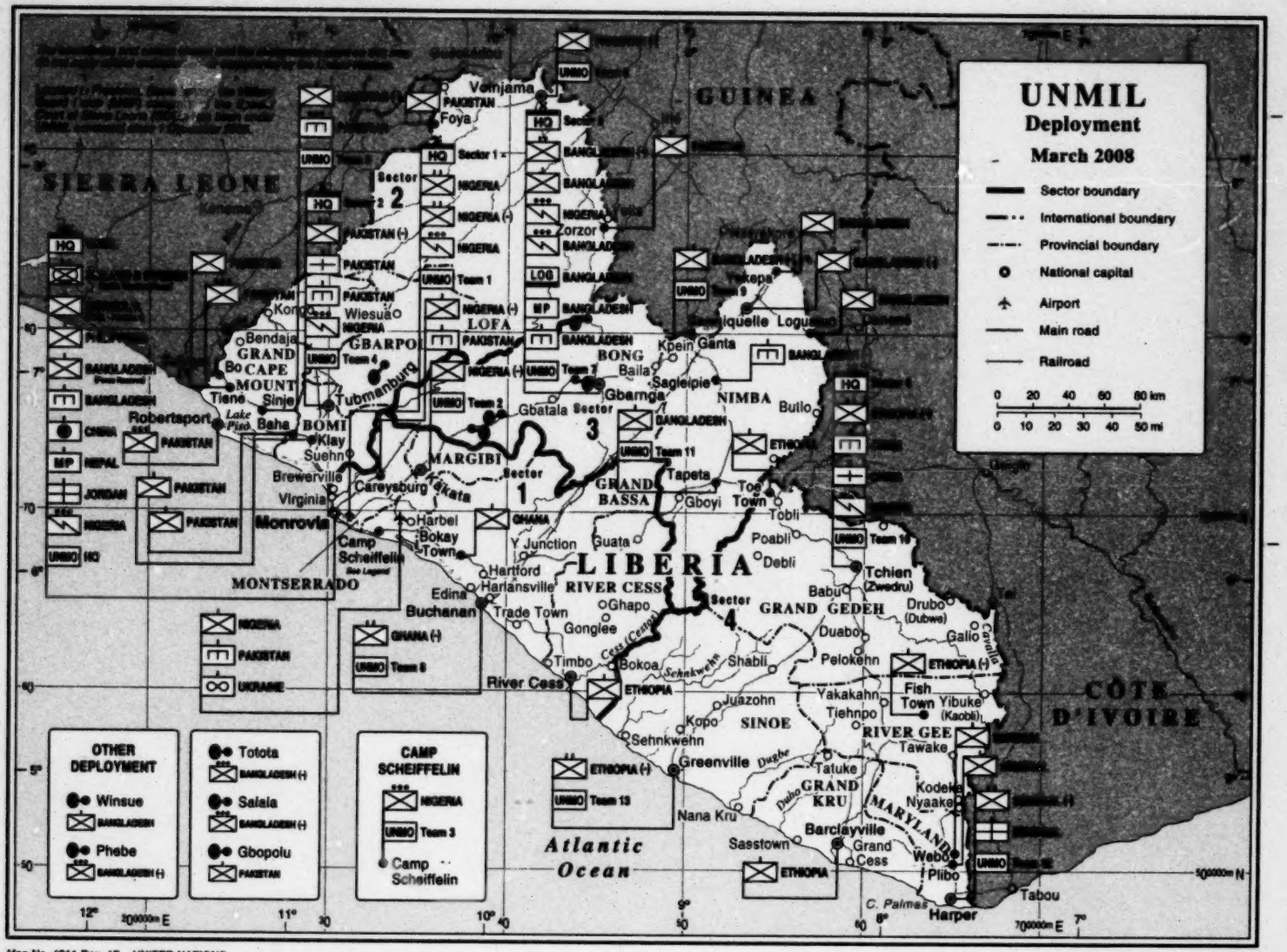
[c] Contextual benchmarks: conditions or factors that could potentially reignite violent conflict or interact with core benchmarks to undermine security.

Annex II

United Nations Mission in Liberia: military and civilian police strength (as at 1 March 2008)

Component	*Military*				*Police*
Country	*Military observers*	*Staff officer*	*Troops*	*Total*	*Civilian police*
Argentina	0	0	0	0	8
Bangladesh	18	11	2 782	2 811	30
Benin	3	1	0	4	0
Bolivia	3	1		4	0
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0	0	0	0	12
Brazil	0	3	0	3	0
Bulgaria	2	0	0	2	0
China	5	8	558	571	10
Croatia	0	5	0	5	0
Czech Republic	3	0	0	3	5
Denmark	3	0	0	3	0
Ecuador	2	1	0	3	0
El Salvador	3	0	0	3	4
Ethiopia	19	6	1 776	1 801	0
Egypt	5	0	0	3	1
Fiji	0	0	0	0	30
Finland	0	2	0	2	0
France	0	1	0	1	0
Gambia	2	0	0	2	24
Germany	0	0	0	0	5
Ghana	12	7	850	869	46
India	0	0	0	0	125
Indonesia	3	0	0	3	0
Jamaica	0	0	0	0	5
Jordan	7	8	115	130	146
Kenya	3	4	0	7	15
Kyrgyzstan	4	0	0	4	3
Malawi	0	0	0	0	14
Malaysia	10	0	0	10	0
Mali	4	1	0	5	0
Moldova	3	0	0	3	0
Mongolia	0	2	248	250	0
Montenegro	2	0	0	2	0
Namibia	1	2	0	3	4

Component	Military				Police
Country	Military observers	Staff officer	Troops	Total	Civilian police
Nepal	4	3	40	47	257
Nigeria	21	16	1 825	1 862	159
Norway	0	0	0	0	10
Pakistan	13	9	3 381	3 403	31
Paraguay	3	0	0	3	0
Peru	2	1	0	3	0
Philippines	0	5	165	170	34
Poland	2	0	0	2	3
Republic of Korea	1	1	0	2	0
Romania	3	0	0	3	0
Russian Federation	6	0	0	6	10
Rwanda	0	0	0	0	12
Samoa	0	0	0	0	8
Senegal	3	4	600	607	0
Serbia	4	0	0	4	6
Sri Lanka	0	0	0	0	10
Sweden	0	0	0	0	18
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	0	0	0	0	1
Togo	2	1	0	3	0
Turkey	0	0	0	0	26
Uganda	0	0	0	0	22
United Kingdom	0	3	0	3	0
Ukraine	3	1	300	304	14
Uruguay	0	0	0	0	1
United States of America	6	7	0	13	13
Yemen	0	0	0	0	7
Zambia	2	0	0	2	32
Zimbabwe	2	0	0	2	33
Total	**194**	**114**	**12 640**	**12 948**	**1 194**



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Security Council

Distr.: General
19 March 2008

Original: English

Letter dated 19 March 2008 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to request that, in accordance with its previous practice, the Security Council invite the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations to participate in the meeting of the Security Council to be held on Tuesday, 25 March 2008, regarding the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question.

(*Signed*) Dr. Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer

08-28564 (E) 270308

United Nations S/2008/185

Security Council

Distr.: General
20 March 2008

Original: English

Draft resolution

The Security Council,

Recalling its previous resolutions on Afghanistan, in particular its resolution 1746 (2007) extending through 23 March 2008 the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) as established by resolution 1662 (2006), and *recalling also* its resolution 1659 (2006) endorsing the Afghanistan Compact,

Reaffirming its strong commitment to the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and national unity of Afghanistan,

Reaffirming its continued support for the Government and people of Afghanistan as they rebuild their country, strengthen the foundations of sustainable peace and constitutional democracy and assume their rightful place in the community of nations,

Reaffirming in this context its support for the implementation, under the ownership of the Afghan people, of the Afghanistan Compact, of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) and of the National Drugs Control Strategy, and *noting* that sustained and coordinated efforts by all relevant actors are required to consolidate progress made towards their implementation and to overcome continuing challenges,

Recalling that the Afghanistan Compact is based on a partnership between the Afghan Government and the international community, based on the desire of the parties for Afghanistan to progressively assume responsibility for its own development and security, and with a central and impartial coordinating role for the United Nations,

Stressing the central and impartial role that the United Nations continues to play in promoting peace and stability in Afghanistan by leading the efforts of the international community, including, jointly with the Government of Afghanistan, the coordination and monitoring of efforts in implementing the Afghanistan Compact, and *expressing* its appreciation and strong support for the ongoing efforts of the Secretary-General, his Special Representative for Afghanistan and the women and men of UNAMA,

Recognizing once again the interconnected nature of the challenges in Afghanistan, *reaffirming* that sustainable progress on security, governance and development, as well as the cross-cutting issue of counter-narcotics is mutually

reinforcing and *welcoming* the continuing efforts of the Afghan Government and the international community to address these challenges through a comprehensive approach,

Stressing the importance of a comprehensive approach in addressing the challenges in Afghanistan and *noting*, in this context, the synergies in the objectives of UNAMA and of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), and *stressing* the need for strengthened cooperation, coordination and mutual support, taking due account of their respective designated responsibilities,

Reiterating its concern about the security situation in Afghanistan, in particular the increased violent and terrorist activities by the Taliban, Al-Qaida, illegally armed groups, criminals and those involved in the narcotics trade, and the increasingly strong links between terrorism activities and illicit drugs, resulting in threats to the local population, including children, national security forces and international military and civilian personnel,

Stressing the importance of ensuring safe and unhindered access of humanitarian workers, including United Nations staff and associated personnel,

Expressing also its concern over the harmful consequences of violent and terrorist activities by the Taliban, Al-Qaida and other extremist groups on the capacity of the Afghan Government to guarantee the rule of law, to provide security and basic services to the Afghan people, and to ensure the improvement and protection of their human rights and fundamental freedoms,

Recalling the importance of the Kabul Declaration of 22 December 2002 on Good-Neighbourly Relations (Kabul Declaration) (S/2002/1416), *looking forward* to the Third Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan to be held in Islamabad, and *stressing* the crucial importance of advancing regional cooperation as an effective means to promote security, governance and development in Afghanistan,

Welcoming the holding of the Afghan-Pakistani Peace Jirga in Kabul on August 2007 and the collective determination expressed at the Jirga to bring sustainable peace to the region, including by addressing the terrorist threat, and *expressing its support* for the relevant follow-up processes,

Recalling its resolutions 1265 (1999), 1296 (2000), 1674 (2006), 1738 (2006) on the protection of civilians in armed conflict, its resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security, and its resolution 1612 (2005) on children and armed conflict, and *taking note with appreciation* of the 7th report of the Secretary-General (S/2007/757) on Children and Armed Conflict of 21 December 2007,

1. *Welcomes* the report of the Secretary-General of 6 March 2008 (S/2008/159);

2. *Expresses its appreciation* for the United Nations long-term commitment to work with the Government and the people of Afghanistan;

3. *Decides* to extend the mandate of UNAMA, as defined in its resolutions 1662 (2006) and 1746 (2007), until 23 March 2009;

4. *Decides* further that UNAMA and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, within their mandate and guided by the principle of reinforcing

Afghan ownership and leadership, will lead the international civilian efforts to, inter alia:

(a) promote, as co-chair of the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board (JCMB), more coherent support by the international community to the Afghan Government and the adherence to the principles of aid effectiveness enumerated in the Afghanistan Compact, including through mobilization of resources, coordination of the assistance provided by international donors and organizations, and direction of the contributions of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, in particular for counter-narcotics, reconstruction and development activities;

(b) strengthen the cooperation with ISAF at all levels and throughout the country, in accordance with their existing mandates, in order to improve civil-military coordination, to facilitate the timely exchange of information and to ensure coherence between the activities of national and international security forces and of civilian actors in support of an Afghan-led development and stabilization process, including through engagement with provincial reconstruction teams and engagement with non-governmental organizations;

(c) through a strengthened and expanded presence throughout the country, provide political outreach, promote at the local level the implementation of the Compact, of the ANDS and of the National Drugs Control Strategy, and facilitate inclusion in and understanding of the Government's policies;

(d) provide good offices to support, if requested by the Afghan Government, the implementation of Afghan-led reconciliation programmes, within the framework of the Afghan Constitution and with full respect of the implementation of measures introduced by the Security Council in its resolution 1267 (1999) and other relevant resolutions of the Council;

(e) support efforts, including through the Independent Directorate for Local Governance, to improve governance and the rule of law and to combat corruption, in particular at subnational level, and to promote development initiatives at the local level with a view to helping bring the benefits of peace and deliver services in a timely and sustainable manner;

(f) play a central coordinating role to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance in accordance with humanitarian principles and with a view to building the capacity of the Afghan Government, including by providing effective support to national and local authorities in assisting and protecting internally displaced persons and to creating conditions conducive to the voluntary, safe, dignified and sustainable return of refugees and internally displaced persons;

(g) continue, with the support of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, to cooperate with the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC), to cooperate also with relevant international and local non-governmental organizations, to monitor the situation of civilians, to coordinate efforts to ensure their protection and to assist in the full implementation of the fundamental freedoms and human rights provisions of the Afghan Constitution and international treaties to which Afghanistan is a state party, in particular those regarding the full enjoyment by women of their human rights;

(h) support, at the request of the Afghan authorities, the electoral process, in particular through the Afghan Independent Electoral Commission (AIEC), by

providing technical assistance, coordinating other international donors, agencies and organizations providing assistance and channelling existing and additional funds earmarked to support the process;

(i) support regional cooperation to work towards a stable and prosperous Afghanistan;

5. *Calls* upon all Afghan and international parties to coordinate with UNAMA in the implementation of its mandate and in efforts to promote the security and freedom of movement of United Nations and associated personnel throughout the country;

6. *Stresses* the importance of strengthening and expanding the presence of UNAMA and other United Nations agencies, funds and programmes in the provinces, and *encourages* the Secretary-General to pursue current efforts to finalize the necessary arrangements to address the security issues associated with such strengthening and expansion;

7. *Calls* on the Afghan Government, and the international community and international organizations, to implement the Afghanistan Compact and its annexes in full, and *stresses* in this context the importance of meeting the benchmarks and timelines of the Compact for progress on security, governance, rule of law and human rights, and economic and social development, as well as the cross-cutting issue of counter-narcotics;

8. *Reaffirms* the central role played by the JCMB in coordinating, facilitating and monitoring the implementation of the Compact, *stresses* the need to strengthen its authority and capacity to, inter alia, measure progress towards the benchmarks outlined in the Afghanistan Compact and facilitate the coordination of international assistance in support of the ANDS, and *calls upon* all relevant actors to cooperate with the JCMB in this regard, including by reporting assistance programmes to the Afghan Government's aid coordination unit and to the JCMB;

9. *Welcomes* the progress made by the Afghan Government in the finalization of the ANDS, *looks forward* to its launch, and *stresses* the importance, in this context, of adequate resource mobilization, including through the fulfilment of the pledges made at the London Conference, possible new pledges and increased assistance to the core budget;

10. *Notes* with interest the intention, expressed by JCMB members at the Political Directors Meeting on Afghanistan held in Tokyo on 5 February 2008, to prepare an international conference to review progress on the implementation of the Afghanistan Compact, *welcomes* the offer of France to host such conference in Paris in June 2008, and *requests* the Secretary-General to report to the Security Council on its outcome and to include in this report, if necessary, further recommendations concerning UNAMA's mandate;

11. *Calls upon* the Afghan Government, with the assistance of the international community, including the International Security Assistance Force and Operation Enduring Freedom coalition, in accordance with their respective designated responsibilities as they evolve, to continue to address the threat to the security and stability of Afghanistan posed by the Taliban, Al-Qaida, illegally armed groups, criminals and those involved in the narcotics trade;

12. *Condemns* in the strongest terms all attacks, including Improvised Explosive Device (IED) attacks, suicide attacks and abductions, targeting civilians and Afghan and international forces and their deleterious effect on the stabilization, reconstruction and development efforts in Afghanistan, and *condemns further* the use by the Taliban and other extremist groups of civilians as human shields;

13. *Reiterates* its concern about all civilian casualties, *calls* for compliance with international humanitarian and human rights law and for all appropriate steps to be taken to ensure the protection of civilians, and *recognizes* in this context the robust efforts taken by ISAF and other international forces to minimize the risk of civilian casualties, notably the continuous review of tactics and procedures and the conduct of after-action reviews in cooperation with the Afghan Government in cases where civilian casualties have reportedly occurred;

14. *Expresses its strong concern* about the recruitment and use of children by Taliban forces in Afghanistan as well as the killing and maiming of children as a result of the conflict, *reiterates its strong condemnation* of the recruitment and use of child soldiers in violation of applicable international law and all other violations and abuses committed against children in situations of armed conflict, and *stresses* the importance of implementing Security Council resolution 1612 (2005); in this context, *requests* the Secretary-General to strengthen the child protection component of UNAMA, in particular through the appointment of child protection advisers;

15. *Stresses* the importance of increasing, in a comprehensive framework, the functionality, professionalism and accountability of the Afghan security sector through training, mentoring and empowerment efforts, in order to accelerate progress towards the goal of self-sufficient and ethnically balanced Afghan security forces providing security and ensuring the rule of law throughout the country;

16. *Welcomes* in this context the continued progress in the development of the Afghan National Army and its improved ability to plan and undertake operations, and *encourages* sustained training efforts, including through the Operational Mentoring and Liaison Teams (OMLTs), and advise in developing a sustainable defence planning process as well as assistance in defence reform initiatives;

17. *Calls* for further efforts to enhance the capabilities of the Afghan National Police in order to reinforce the authority of the Afghan Government throughout the country, *welcomes* the increasing role played by the International Police Coordination Board in policy setting and coordination, and *stresses* the importance, in this context, of the contribution of the European Union through its police mission (EUPOL Afghanistan);

18. *Calls* for further progress in the implementation by the Afghan Government, with support from the international community, of the programme of disbandment of illegal armed groups (DIAG);

19. *Expresses* its concern at the serious harm that increasing opium cultivation, production and trafficking causes to the security, development and governance of Afghanistan as well as to the region and internationally; *calls on* the Afghan Government, with the assistance of the international community, to accelerate the implementation of the National Drug Control Strategy as discussed at the JCMB meeting held in Tokyo in February 2008, in particular at the local level, and to mainstream counter-narcotics throughout national programmes; *encourages*

additional international support for the four priorities identified in that Strategy, including through contributions to the Counter Narcotics Trust Fund;

20. *Calls upon* States to strengthen international and regional cooperation to counter the threat to the international community posed by the illicit production and trafficking of drugs originated in Afghanistan, including through border management cooperation in drug control and cooperation for the fight against the illicit trafficking in drugs and precursors and against money-laundering linked to such trafficking, taking into account the outcome of the Second Ministerial Conference on Drug Trafficking Routes from Afghanistan organized by the Government of the Russian Federation in cooperation with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime held in Moscow from 26 to 28 June 2006 (S/2006/598), within the framework of the Paris Pact initiative;

21. *Welcomes* the adoption by the Afghan authorities, in accordance with the outcome of the Rome Conference on the Rule of Law in Afghanistan, of the National Justice Programme launched at the JCMB meeting held in Tokyo in February 2008, and *stresses* the importance of its full and timely implementation by all the relevant actors in order to accelerate the establishment of a fair and transparent justice system, strengthen the rule of law throughout the country and eliminate impunity;

22. *Stresses* in this context the importance of further progress in the reconstruction and reform of the prison sector in Afghanistan, in order to improve the respect for the rule of law and human rights therein;

23. *Notes with concern* the effects of widespread corruption on security, good governance, counter-narcotics efforts and economic development, and *calls on* the Afghan Government, with the assistance of the international community, to vigorously lead the fight against corruption and to enhance its efforts to establish a more effective, accountable and transparent administration;

24. *Encourages* all Afghan institutions, including the executive and legislative branches, to work in a spirit of cooperation, *calls on* the Afghan Government to pursue continued legislative and public administration reform in order to ensure good governance, full representation and accountability at both national and subnational levels, *stresses* the need for further international efforts to provide technical assistance in this area, and *recalls* the role of the Senior Appointments Panel in accordance with the Afghanistan Compact;

25. *Encourages* the international community to assist the Government of Afghanistan in making capacity-building and human resources development a cross-cutting priority;

26. *Notes* the leading role that the Afghan institutions will play in the organization of the next elections, *encourages* the Afghan Government, with support from the international community, to accelerate the planning and preparation of such elections, *stresses the need* to establish a permanent Civil Voter Registry (CVR) in accordance with the Afghanistan Compact, and *emphasizes* the importance of free, fair, inclusive and transparent elections in order to sustain the democratic progress of the country;

27. *Calls for* full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and international humanitarian law throughout Afghanistan, *notes with concern* the

increasing restrictions on freedom of media, *commends* the AIHRC for its courageous efforts to monitor respect for human rights in Afghanistan as well as to foster and protect these rights and to promote the emergence of a pluralistic civil society, and *stresses* the importance of full cooperation with the AIHRC by all relevant actors;

28. *Recognizes* the significant progress achieved on gender equality in Afghanistan in recent years, *strongly condemns* continuing forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls, *stresses* the importance of implementing Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), and *requests* the Secretary-General to continue to include in its reports to the Security Council relevant information on the process of integration of women into the political, economic and social life of Afghanistan;

29. *Calls for* enhanced efforts to ensure the full implementation of the Action Plan on Peace, Justice and Reconciliation in accordance with the Afghanistan Compact, without prejudice to the implementation of measures introduced by the Security Council in its resolution 1267 (1999) of 15 October 1999 and other relevant resolutions of the Security Council;

30. *Welcomes* the cooperation of the Afghan Government and UNAMA with the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999) with the implementation of resolution 1735 (2006), including by identifying individuals and entities participating in the financing or support of acts or activities of Al-Qaida and the Taliban using proceeds derived from illicit cultivation, production and trafficking of narcotic drugs and their precursors, and *encourages* the continuation of such cooperation;

31. *Welcomes* ongoing efforts by the Government of Afghanistan and its neighbouring and regional partners to foster trust and cooperation with each other, including recent cooperation initiatives developed by regional organizations, and *stresses* the importance of increasing cooperation between Afghanistan and the partners against the Taliban, Al-Qaida and other extremist groups, in promoting peace and prosperity in Afghanistan and in fostering cooperation in the economic and development sectors as a means to achieve the full integration of Afghanistan into regional dynamics and the global economy;

32. *Calls for* strengthening the process of regional economic cooperation, including measures to facilitate regional trade, to increase foreign investments and to develop infrastructure, noting Afghanistan's historic role as a land bridge in Asia;

33. *Recognizes* the importance of voluntary, safe, orderly return and sustainable reintegration of the remaining Afghan refugees for the stability of the country and the region, and *calls for* continued and enhanced international assistance in this regard;

34. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the Council every six months on developments in Afghanistan, in addition to the report requested in paragraph 10 of this resolution;

35. *Decides* to remain actively seized of the matter.